



GAIL FARBER  
Director of Public Works

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## AVIATION COMMISSION

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

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### LOS ANGELES COUNTY AVIATION COMMISSION

February 29, 2012, Meeting  
Compton/Woodley Airport  
901 West Alondra Boulevard  
Compton, CA 90220-3528  
(310) 631-8140

### COMMISSIONERS

CLINTON SIMMONS  
*CHAIRMAN*

DENNIS C. LORD  
*VICE CHAIRMAN*

PETER AMUNDSON  
*SECRETARY*

GEORGE G. BUTTS  
*MEMBER*

ANGELO R. CARDONO  
*MEMBER*

BOBBY E. CHASE  
*MEMBER*

PENELOPE CORNWALL  
*MEMBER*

HARVEY HOLLOWAY  
*MEMBER*

ARON A. WOLF  
*MEMBER*

VACANT  
*MEMBER*

### IN ATTENDANCE

Chairman Clinton Simmons  
Vice Chairman Dennis C. Lord  
Secretary Peter Amundson  
Commissioner George G. Butts  
Commissioner Angelo R. Cardono  
Commissioner Bobby E. Chase

### OFFICIALLY EXCUSED

Commissioner Penelope Cornwall  
Commissioner Harvey A. Holloway  
Commissioner Aron A. Wolf

### COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS STAFF

Mr. Dennis Hunter, Deputy Director  
Mr. Richard L. Smith, Chief, Aviation Division  
Mr. Aaron Walsh, Airport Project Coordinator

### AMERICAN AIRPORTS CORPORATION - AIRPORT SERVICES DIVISION STAFF

Mr. Scott Wardle, Regional Director  
Mr. Chris Brooks, Manager, El Monte Airport  
Mr. Rafael Herrera, Manager, Compton/Woodley Airport  
Mr. Steve Irving, Manager, General Wm. J. Fox Airfield  
Mr. Andrew Marino, Manager, Whiteman Airport  
Mr. Cyle Woodruff, Manager, Brackett Field Airport

### GUESTS

Mr. Don Hagopian, Whiteman Airport Association  
Mrs. Shellie Hagopian, Whiteman Airport Association  
Ms. Marisa Iadevaia, Rocky's  
Mr. Jack Kenton  
Mr. Bill Logan  
Mr. Jeffrey Chase

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Simmons called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Simmons led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **I. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACTION BY THE COMMISSION**

### **A. January 25, 2012, Minutes**

The minutes were unanimously carried and approved.

### **B. American Airports Corporation - Project Manager Report**

Mr. Wardle discussed the recent increase in the wholesale price of fuel and explained that American Airports Corporation (AAC) was managing their inventory to weather the increase should it turn out to be just a temporary spike in price. Three of the airports have a large capacity for fuel storage and the airport managers of those airports have preempted the higher costs by buying the fuel at a lower price and completely filling their tanks. Whiteman Airport and Brackett Field Airport do not have a large storage capacity so they will inevitably see a price increase first. Mr. Wardle pointed out that the airports have about 90 to 100 vacant hangars across the five airports before deferring to the airport managers for more details.

### **Mr. Andrew Marino reported on Whiteman Airport events**

- **Management and Maintenance**

Regularly scheduled maintenance on airport lighting had been performed over the last month. Work included rewiring a couple of stadium lights and then installing replacement bulbs on several other fixtures around the airport.

- **Projects**

The County's tie-down construction project is under way. It took approximately 2 weeks for AAC personnel to move the aircraft off the apron in order to get ready for this project, according to Mr. Marino. The impact of the project to the airport has been minimal. A section of Taxiway Alpha still remains closed but a detour around the construction project was created. One airport tenant did taxi a tail dragger airplane into a frangible construction stop sign. Chairman Simmons had a follow up question about the project regarding the anticipated completion date. Mr.

Marino stated that he understood that the project would be completed in June.

In regards to the County's airport entrance enhancement project at Airpark Way and Osborne Street, the entrance signs have now been installed. The signs include name plates for the major commercial tenants located off of Airpark Way. Landscaping still needs to be completed before the project will be closed out.

- **Development and Activities**

Whiteman Airport Avgas sales were down 13 percent in January from the same period last year but Jet-A sales were up 25 percent. This increase is attributed to the flight operations of Angel City Air, the largest operator of helicopters on the airport.

Total airport operations were down slightly for the month.

Hangar occupancy is at 86 percent and there is a short waiting list for tie-downs. The County's current construction project will yield an additional 70 tie-downs when it is complete.

- **Meetings and Events**

Whiteman Airport Association held their monthly meeting February 15th.

The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) held their Young Eagles event on February 26th.

Aviation Explorers is holding their annual pancake breakfast March 24th.

- **Miscellaneous**

A large tree that was located in the grassy public viewing area collapsed during the heavy winds on January 28th. Twenty-five feet of fencing was damaged but has been replaced. The tree was removed and the hole was filled and replanted with grass.

### **Mr. Chris Brooks reported on El Monte Airport events**

- **Management and Maintenance**

There has been some newly discovered hangar damage as a result of the windstorm that occurred several months ago. The damage is minor and repairs are being made as they are found.

Maintenance work on the airport vehicles was heavier than usual this month with transmission repairs, new tires, and preventative maintenance

items. Vehicles included the fuel trucks, Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting vehicle, tractor mower, and operations vehicle.

- **Projects**

The rewiring project for the airports back-up power generator was completed and airport staff has made some improvements to the airport's security camera system.

- **Development and Activities**

There are 17 vacant hangars on the airport. Occupancy remains at 93 percent.

Total operations were slightly down from the same time last year.

Avgas fuel sales were down slightly while Jet-A sales were up 14 percent over last year.

- **Meetings and Events**

The Airport Association's fly-in and static display were held at the airport on February 27th.

- **Miscellaneous**

Commissioner Butts inquired about the wildlife management program at the airport. Mr. Brooks said they have not had any sightings of the coyote that was previously dwelling on the airfield.

### **Mr. Cyle Woodruff reported on Brackett Field Airport events**

- **Management and Maintenance**

Hangar repairs and maintenance to airport vehicles were completed. The operations vehicle passed a smog check but not before airport staff troubleshot an illuminated check engine light and made the appropriate repairs. Mr. Wardle commented that if a vehicle has a check engine light on the smog check station would not allow it to be tested.

- **Projects**

Mr. Woodruff reported that a section of the airport entrance road on the north side was repaved. Mr. Woodruff worked with the County Aviation Division to coordinate and fund the work. The road had segments of missing pavement and was in disrepair overall. Mt. San Antonio College employees and students that use the road are very pleased with the results.

- **Development and Activities**

There are no vacancies in the commercial space at Brackett Field Airport. However, 12 percent (33 in total) of the noncommercial aircraft storage hangars are vacant.

Jet-A fuel sales were up 23 percent and Avgas fuel sales were down 24 percent from the same period the prior year. The Citation jet newly-based at the airport has contributed to the increase in Jet-A fuel sales.

- **Meetings and Events**

The Brackett Airport Association meeting will be held the first Thursday of the month and the aircraft display day will be held on the third Sunday.

**Mr. Rafael Herrera reported on Compton/Woodley Airport events**

- **Management and Maintenance**

General maintenance was performed on the airport's public restrooms and vehicle access gates. The weed abatement program has been ongoing.

- **Projects**

Airport maintenance personnel removed and replaced the gate operator on the Wilmington vehicle access gate.

The Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS) is operational and a new computer display in the terminal building is providing current weather information to the public.

- **Development and Activities**

Three hangars and three end rooms at the airport are currently vacant.

Overall fuel sales were down 19 percent last month compared to the same period last year.

- **Meetings and Events**

Mr. Herrera attended a meeting for the Compton/Woodley Airport Users Group on February 11th. He updated those in attendance on the operations and activities at the airport. The EAA requested that a windsock be installed on top of their hangar. Mr. Herrera approved the EAA's request and installed the windsock.

Commissioner Chase commented on the uncertainty of contracting out the Los Angeles County Airports. He pointed out that there was uncertainty in the beginning when the day-to-day operational management was contracted out, but that there has been a good relationship between the County and the contractor and the system is working well. He cited how the accomplishment of various large capital projects and the ongoing maintenance of the airports were a good example.

### **Mr. Steve Irving reported on General William J. Fox Airfield events**

- **Projects**

Mr. Irving reported that he received a request from the Fox Field Pilots Association for a large flat screen television in the terminal to help with their meetings and would also be beneficial to the general public. Mr. Irving told Mr. Wardle that AAC accommodated the Pilots Association's request and will install a television in the terminal building in the near future.

- **Development and Activities**

Two helicopter companies are basing their operations out of General William J. Fox Airfield in support of a project to lay new power lines in the local area. The two companies are Rogers Helicopters and Winco Helicopters both have been buying fuel from the airport.

Jet A fuel sales are up 50 percent mostly due to the increased helicopter activity. Avgas fuel sales are up about 5 percent.

Mr. Irving mentioned that the airport will be getting a visit by C-130 aircraft from the Air National Guard unit at Point Mugu to conduct an annual training exercise with the U.S. Forest Service located on the airport.

### **C. County Contract Administrator's Report – Mr. Richard Smith**

- **Expense and Revenue Report for September 2012**

Mr. Smith provided the Commission with copies of the revenue and expense report and offered to answer any questions.

- **Federal Aviation Association (FAA) Budget Reauthorization**

The FAA's Airport Improvement Program (AIP) has been on 22 temporary spending resolutions over the last several years, which has made project scheduling, the bidding process, and master planning in general problematic for airport sponsors. It has also led to additional staff time to deal with added complications. Two weeks ago, however, the President signed a 4-year reauthorization for funding the FAA and various aviation

programs including the AIP. The County Aviation Division will now be able to work out 3 years on its Capital Improvement Program, which should ultimately translate into cost savings for the County airports.

- **Contract Tower Program**

Contract air traffic control towers are also funded under the temporary spending resolutions and were previously targeted for cost cutting in the FAA's proposed budget. The good news is that the final budget recently reauthorized did not include a reduction in this program. The contract air traffic control towers at both Whiteman Airport and General William J. Fox Airfield are busy enough to warrant full funding for the program.

- **Minimum Standards**

County Counsel is reviewing the documents and will be putting together their final comments. The minimum standards incorporate the different types of commercial operating permits, as well as set the service standards for businesses at the airports. Commissioner Cardono asked if permit fees will be in addition to business license fees charged by the cities. Mr. Smith stated that the city business license fees are separate from leases and permits issued by the airport. He explained further that the minimum standards do not establish a fee schedule. A formal fee schedule is being developed, will be presented as a stand-alone document.

- **Capital Projects Update**

Construction on the ramp project at Whiteman Airport started February 13th and airport operations have not been interrupted. The project is proceeding ahead of schedule and Sully-Miller, the engineering contractor for the project, anticipates they will be pouring new asphalt for the ramp in April.

County Council is currently reviewing the Mitigated Negative Declaration and related documents for the Whiteman Airport Master Plan Update.

It is anticipated that the final job walk for the airport entrance enhancement project at Airpark Way and Osborne Street will take place in March.

- **Restaurant at Whiteman Airport**

Mr. Smith informed the Commission that the restaurant at Whiteman Airport, Rocky's, had been operating on a month-to-month holdover agreement since its lease expired in 2008. In an effort to address feedback received from airport users in the annual Customer Service Surveys administered by the County and to make physical enhancements

to the restaurant facility, the County Aviation Division has elected to discontinue the current operator's holdover agreement. Mr. Smith stated that a restaurant at the airport is a valuable service to airport tenants and users and the County Aviation Division and American Airports are doing everything possible to ensure that there will be only a minimal gap in service throughout the processes.

Chairman Simmons inquired as to whether the current restaurant operator has had an opportunity to discuss their lease with the airport throughout the process. Mr. Smith advised the Commission that the opportunity has indeed been given to the operator and was there all along. Neither the County Aviation Division nor American Airports has been approached by representatives of Rocky's to discuss options.

#### **D. Compton Airport Items**

The AWOS at the airport is up and operational. Mr. Smith reiterated that the AWOS at the County airports are the latest in weather observation technology. The information available is much greater, more reliable, and is displayed in a more user-friendly format.

Additionally, the County Aviation Division has been working with Southern California Edison to obtain rebates for lighting upgrade projects at the airport. All exterior lights on hangar rows AA-R will be replaced with new energy efficient lights.

## **II. PUBLIC COMMENT – OPEN FORUM**

Mrs. Shellie Hagopian mentioned that she sent a letter regarding Rocky's to the aviation commission and she proceeded to read it. The letter described the disappointment of several pilots regarding the potential closure of the restaurant. Mrs. Hagopian said that she was representing the Whiteman Airport Association and explained that they have held their holiday party at the restaurant for years and that the dinner has always received a lot of praise. She also said that she and others have written in the annual Customer Service Surveys that they would like a nicer restaurant but that does not mean they do not want Rocky's. Mrs. Hagopian noted that the buildings where other airport restaurants are located are better facilities and that Rocky's has had to make do with what they have. She also noted that Rocky's has made few improvements and that she does not believe removing the restaurant would be prudent at this time. Mrs. Hagopian presented a petition signed by 31 people at the last Airport Association meeting in support of Rocky's.

Mr. Don Hagopian commented that the people he has talked to around the airport were upset that the restaurant was closing and wondered if the letters sent by tenants had been considered. Mr. Smith replied by stating that all communications are good and the letters were valuable. Mr. Hagopian suggested that perhaps the current operator could remain doing business at least until construction for the remodeling project began.

Ms. Marissa Iadevaia introduced herself as the sole proprietor of Rocky's and stated she has hosted a lot of events and brought the airport business. She says she has financial obligations and commitments to tenants at the airport that she would not be able to meet if the restaurant were closed. Since owning the restaurant for 9 years she said that she has invested \$2,000 in improvements. Chairman Simmons asked if she has tried to negotiate a new lease since 2008 when her lease expired. She said that although she proposed a 6-month or longer lease when her lease expired in 2008, she was unable to come to an arrangement for other than a month-to-month holdover. She understood, however, that she would be able to participate in the competitive bidding process after the remodeling takes place.

Mr. Smith reiterated that much effort is being put into minimizing any gap in service that will take place. The competitive bidding process and other necessary procedures will take some time.

Mr. Wardle informed the Commission that Rocky's was given a 30-day notice in January. He stated that American Airports has also responded to a letter received from Rocky's in 2008 which allowed the restaurant to continue to operate on a month-to-month holdover agreement as it was thought that construction of a terminal was going to be delayed.

Mr. Jack Kenton addressed the Commission and requested that they look into the possibility of offering mogas for sale at the airports. He also complimented the Commission on the nice work completed on the airport ramp but stated that there are a few surface irregularities that still need to be corrected.

Mr. Bill Logan addressed the Commission and expressed his views of the mission of the airports and the purpose of government. Mr. Simmons asked for clarification on how the Commission could assist him. Mr. Logan stated that he is a tenant at Whiteman Airport and that he wanted to clarify that the people own the airport and that it is not American Airports Corporation's place to give a 30-day notice to the restaurant. Chairman Simmons thanked Mr. Logan for his comments. Commissioner Butts explained to Mr. Logan that this issue is being looked at by County Counsel and the Board Office.

### **III. OTHER ITEMS**

Chairman Simmons expressed an interest to learn more about the evolution of the Unmanned Aircraft Systems and how they may impact the County airports. Mr. Smith said that he would research the subject and advise Chairman Simmons on where the FAA is in their rulemaking process.

Mr. Smith presented Commissioner Cardono with an award for his seventh term as Chairman of the Los Angeles County Aviation Commission and his thirty-eight years service. Commissioner Cardono expressed his appreciation and stated that he treasures the time he has spent with the commissioners and all those involved with the airports. Commissioner Cardono stated that he has traveled to many small

airports throughout the United States and he feels that the County's airports are among the very best.

**IV. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING WILL BE ON:**

**Wednesday, March 28, 2012, 10 a.m.  
General William J. Fox Airfield  
4555 West Avenue G  
Lancaster, CA 93536-8401  
(661) 940-1709**

Chairman Simmons adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:24 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Clinton Simmons, Chairman  
Los Angeles County Aviation Commission